


NORTHAMPTON POLICE DEPARTMENT Administration & Operations Manual		
Policy: Domestic Violence Intervention Project		AOM: O-211, tb3
Massachusetts Police Accreditation Standards Referenced:		Issuing Authority Jody Kasper Chief of Police
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I. Introductory Discussion

- A.** In response to the growing problem of domestic violence in our community, a partnership has been formed between the Northwestern District Attorney's Office, Safe Passage, the Northampton Police Department and other area police departments.
- B.** The purpose of the Domestic Violence Intervention Project (DVIP) is to provide victims of domestic violence with immediate supportive intervention by trained domestic violence advocates from local established battered woman's programs. A multi-agency, early intervention approach has been demonstrated to result in more support and services for the victim, fewer repeat calls for the police, an increase in interventions with abusers and more successful prosecution.

II. Involved Participants

- A.** Advocates will be equipped with a cell phone each weekday evening from 8 PM to 7 AM, and 24 hours on weekends (Friday 8 PM through Monday at 7 AM or Tuesday at 7AM for Monday holidays. Advocates are contacted through Crocker Communications, Inc. (1-866-403-1460).
- B.** Advocates will participate in partnership meetings four times per year.
- C.** Police officers (or dispatchers) will provide the communication link between the DVIP advocate and the victim. A designated Northampton Police officer will be the DVIP Liaison Officer who will participate in partnership meetings four times a year.

III. Procedures for Police

- A.** When investigating any domestic violence calls that result in charges or arrest, including restraining order violations, the Officer ***shall contact DVIP as soon as possible.***
- B.** When investigating any domestic violence call when no charges are brought, if the officer feels the victim might benefit from speaking to an advocate, the officer may contact the DVIP.
- C.** When contacting the DVIP, the officer shall:

1. Advise the victim that part of this department's protocol is to contact an advocate who will call her and answer any questions and provide any support that is needed. This should be framed as an automatic police response, rather than in terms of a question where the victim may turn down the service.
2. Contact Crocker Communications who will immediately patch the call through to the on-duty advocate. If the advocate is immediately unavailable a voice mail will be left. All DVIP cell phones have the following prompt:

You have reached (advocate name) at DVIP. Please leave your name, department and a call back number. Also, please leave the victim's name, safe contact number and a brief description of the incident including the offender's location. If this call is during off hours, please include the name and contact information of an officer who can be reached after 8pm.

Advocate will only call back upon your request and/or if they need additional information. This call should be made as soon as possible after speaking with the victim.

3. If an advocate is not on call at the time of the incident, allow the victim the following options:
 - a) The police shall have the DVIP contact the victim when the advocate comes on duty. This is accomplished by contacting Crocker Communications and leaving a voicemail. At 2015 hours, Crocker will contact the on-call advocate to advise her that she has a voicemail.

- b) Call the Safe Passage hotline at 586-5066 or 1-888-345-5282.
- 4. Document in the report that an advocate was contacted, but do not list the advocate's name.
- 5. If requested, the officer will provide transportation for the victim to meet with the advocate at a safe location.

IV. Service Population

- A.** The DVIP is in place to assist any victim of spouse/partner/dating violence, (same sex or heterosexual relationships) family violence involving adult victims, and teenagers when it is a dating violence situation.
- B.** Non-English Speaking Victims - *Safelink* is a statewide, toll free, 24/7 hotline that provides multi-lingual translation services and trained advocates. *Llamanos* is a statewide, toll free, 24/7 Spanish hotline.

Refer to **AOM 0211 Domestic Violence** and **AOM 0211tb1 Domestic Violence Reporting Requirements** for additional information.